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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2798
INFO RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 0034
RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA 0009
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 9368
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0362

C O N F I D E N T I A L COLOMBO 000373

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/08/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [UNSC](#) [CE](#)
SUBJECT: SRI LANKA ALMOST CERTAINLY TO SUPPORT GUATEMALA
OVER VENEZUELA FOR NON-PERMANENT UNSC SEAT

REF: (A) COLOMBO 207 (B) STATE 20173

Classified By: Ambassador Jeffrey J. Lunstead for reason 1.4 (d).

¶1. (C) The Ambassador demarched Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera March 8 on the need for Guatemala, not Venezuela, to obtain the Latin America seat on the UNSC this fall. Samaraweera said, "At the moment, we are thinking along the same lines. We are moving in that direction." He noted that Guatemala had been very supportive of Sri Lanka in international organizations over the years; "we should reciprocate." Samaraweera expressed concern that some radical political parties would not be happy if Sri Lanka did not support Venezuela. The Ambassador reminded him that the vote in the General Assembly would be by secret ballot.

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¶2. (C) Later the same day, the Ambassador saw Foreign Secretary Palihakkara, who said that a decision had been made and asked if the Minister had conveyed that Sri Lanka would go along on this. The Ambassador asked, "So, you will support Guatemala?" "Yes," Palihakkara replied.

¶3. (C) Comment. From the Foreign Secretary's remarks, we deduce that the decision has been made, but the Minister was purposefully being a bit ambiguous. It seems, however, that Sri Lanka will be in the Guatemala column. End Comment
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